

**THE
SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS
AREA
LABOR AVAILABILITY REPORT**

September, 2014

Compiled and Prepared by



THE PATHFINDERS

www.thepathfindersus.com

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INTRODUCTION

The Pathfinders has employed its many years of experience in workforce assessments for corporate site-selection clients and civilian workforce assessments for the Department of Defense in locations that faced military base closures to produce this evaluation of the Springfield area workforce. In site-selection projects, the question that most often drives the search is whether the candidate location has the workforce needed for a new or expanding operation. When considering the workforce of a possible location, a prospect basically wants to know:

- Can I find the workers I need in this location?
- Do these workers have any skills and/or experience that pertain to my operation?
- How much will these workers cost?

Consequently, an analysis of an area's workforce became a key component of site searches conducted by The Pathfinders. The report that follows was developed as a tool for economic development officials for use in business recruitment and workforce development efforts. Senior human resources executives from among corporate clients assisted in refining the methodology and report format.

With regard to labor availability, while unemployed workers are a source considered in hiring, companies typically also staff a new operation with individuals who are working but who desire better jobs and who appear to possess the skills, education, and experience to qualify them for those better jobs. **By that definition**, those individuals can be considered "underemployed" and are identified as such in this report.

The Pathfinders was retained to quantify the extent to which both unemployment and underemployment exist in the Springfield area. This report also represents the objective and professional view of The Pathfinders with regard to workforce quality, availability, costs, experience and skills that a new or expanding employer can expect in the Springfield region.

The information presented in this report has been developed independently of the client, and the client has not influenced the findings.



KEY FINDINGS

- **The Springfield area, referred to in this report as the “labor shed”, has a household population of approximately 289,300; a civilian labor force of approximately 148,500; and a pool of approximately 12,100 unemployed persons who are actively seeking work.**
- **The results of this survey indicate that a new or expanding employer will be able to attract employees from an additional pool of about 21,500 underemployed workers.**
- **The median current pay rate of the underemployed workers in the labor shed is \$17.00 per hour, and their median desired pay rate is \$18.97 per hour.**
- **Results indicate that underemployed workers are willing to commute an average of 21 miles to a new job, in contrast to their current average commute of 11 miles.**
- **Survey results indicate 21% of the underemployed and 15% of unemployed, actively seeking work individuals in the labor shed have bachelor degrees or higher.**
- **The median desired pay rate of the unemployed workers who are actively seeking work is \$12.00 per hour.**
- **Approximately 2,100 unemployed individuals in the labor shed who are not actively seeking work would consider re-entering the workforce.**
- **The median desired pay rate of the unemployed workers who are considering re-entering the workforce is \$12.00 per hour.**
- **In total, the Springfield area has approximately 35,700 available workers for new or expanding businesses.**



METHODOLOGY

The first step in assessing the workforce of the Springfield area was to determine the boundaries of the area to be assessed. To accomplish this task, The Pathfinders applied the same reasoning that would be used during a site search for a corporate client considering the area as a potential location. The Springfield survey area includes those locations from which workers might be drawn to a new employer and is referred to in this report as the “labor shed”. This labor shed consists of Cass, Christian, Logan, Menard and Sangamon Counties in Illinois.

A map of the Springfield labor shed is included on the following page.

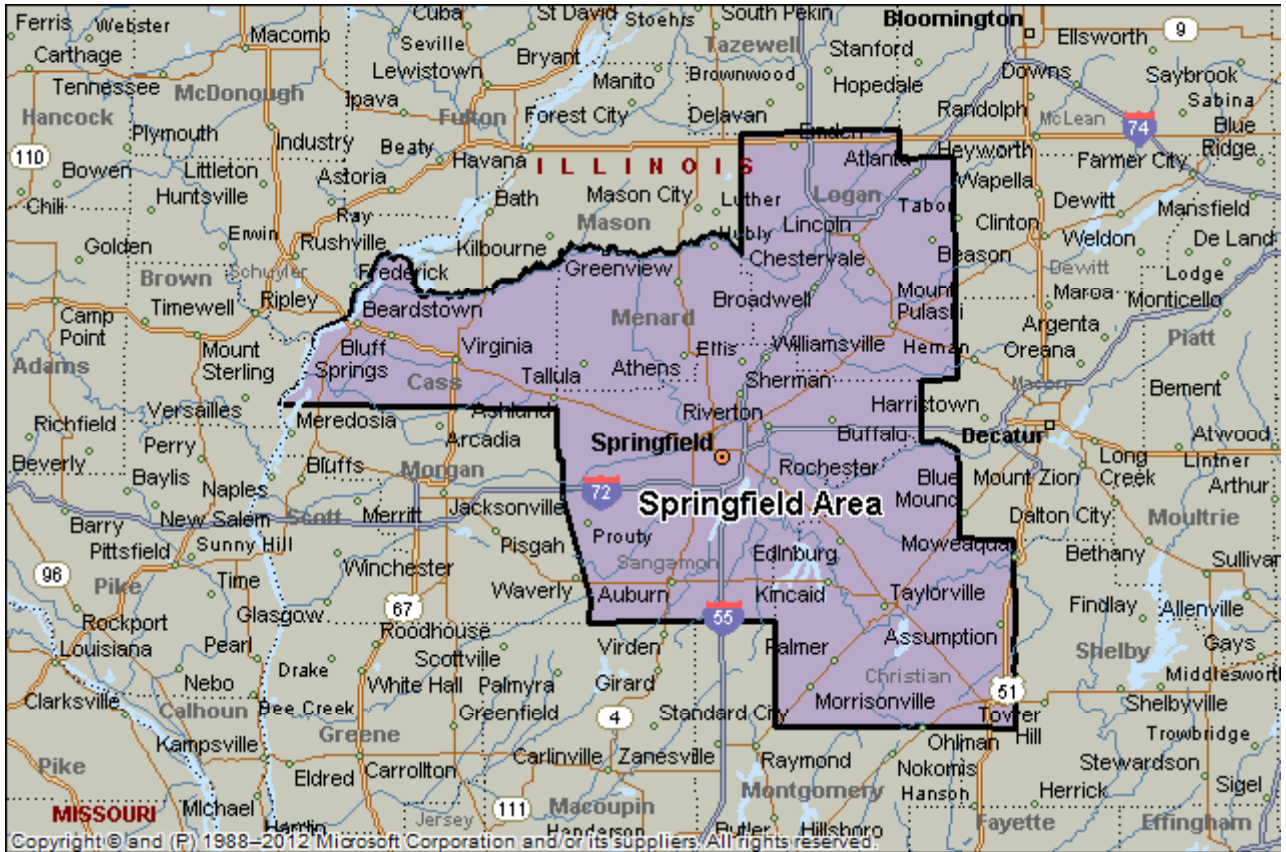
Selected online resources were used in this project. Additionally, The Pathfinders conducted interviews with individuals throughout the Springfield region. Those individuals were proportionally stratified across age, household income, and zip codes. The purpose of these surveys was to ascertain availability for work with a new employer; determine desired pay rates; and, collect information on such factors as age, education, commuting patterns, experience, and skills.

The data obtained as a result of those interviews enabled The Pathfinders to apply and employ a proprietary methodology that accurately determined the existence of underemployment and the quality and characteristics of both the underemployed and unemployed workers in the area. Further, The Pathfinders applied a proprietary process to the analysis of the data to correct for invalid responses. For example, those persons indicating they would take a new job but also indicating the desire for increased or decreased pay that is unreasonable are not included in the results.

It is important to note that companies making location decisions based upon these surveys have reported that when staffing actually began, the numbers reported by The Pathfinders proved to be accurate.



MAP OF THE SPRINGFIELD AREA LABOR SHED



NUMBER OF AVAILABLE WORKERS

The Springfield Area Labor Shed

The Springfield area labor shed has a household population of approximately 289,300. The civilian labor force numbers approximately 148,500 and the labor shed contains approximately 12,100 unemployed people who are actively seeking work.

The results of this assessment determined that approximately 21,500 workers can be defined as underemployed: those individuals who are currently working but would take a better job if offered by a new or existing employer and who appear to possess the skills, education, and experience to qualify them to do so. Another 2,100 individuals would consider re-entering the workforce. Together with the unemployed, actively seeking work individuals, the Springfield area has approximately 35,700 available workers for new or existing employers.

TOTAL AVAILABLE WORKERS

Number of underemployed workers	21,500
Number of unemployed, actively seeking work individuals	12,100
Number of unemployed individuals who are considering re-entering the workforce	2,100
Total Number of Workers Available for Employers*	35,700

* The reader is cautioned that, while the number of workers identified in the region, as well as their skills, experience, education, and costs, is accurate, all of those individuals may not be acceptable candidates for an employer. Their previous work records, stability, integrity, intelligence, appearance, and other factors are not considered in this report.



ASSESSMENT OF THE UNDEREMPLOYED WORKFORCE

The Springfield Area Labor Shed

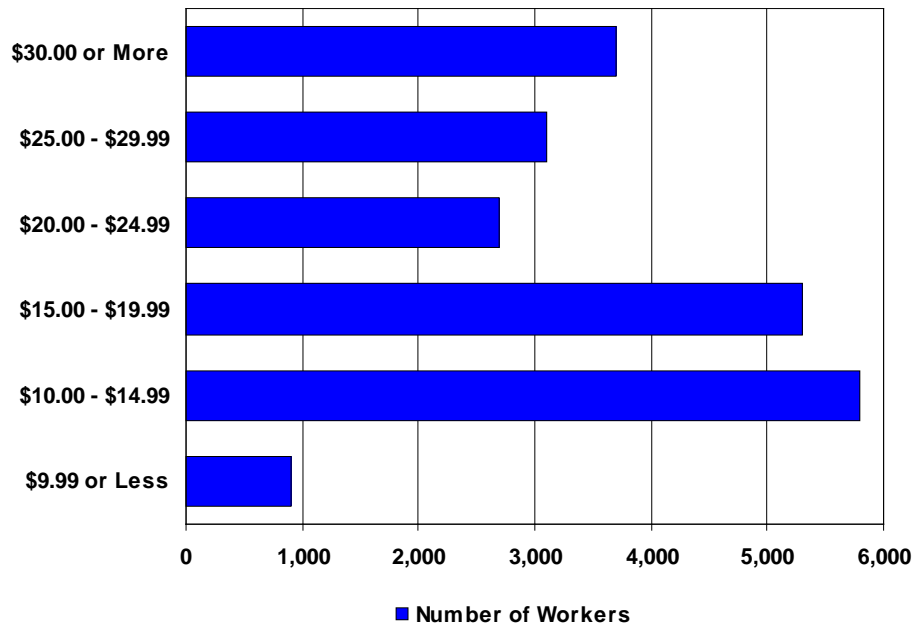
The 21,500 underemployed workers identified in this report might also be termed “upgraders”. They desire to move into an upgraded job and appear to possess the skills, education, and experience to enable them to do so. The following charts represent the desired pay rates of the underemployed individuals in the labor shed. Desired wages are shown by specific rates, range and percentiles.

NUMBER OF UNDEREMPLOYED WORKERS AVAILABLE AT SPECIFIC WAGE RATES PER HOUR (rounded)

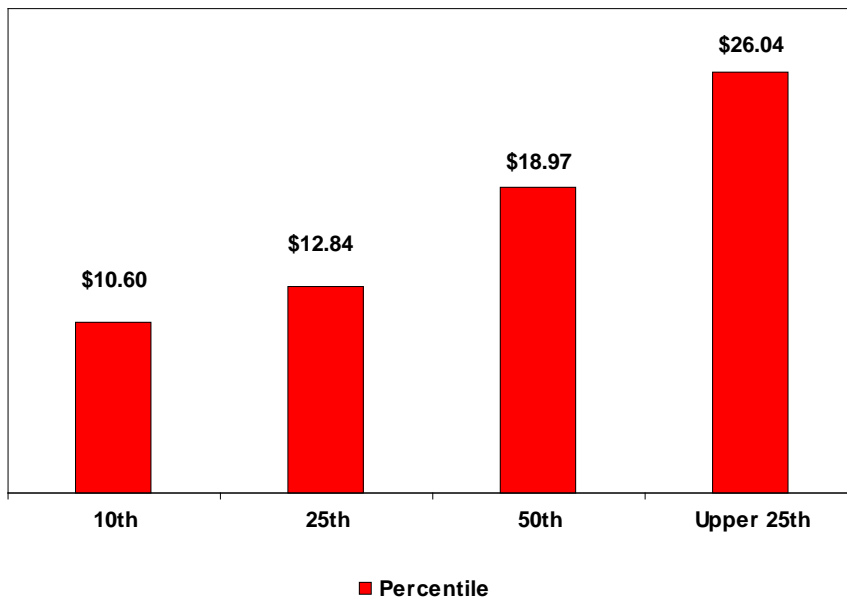
Desired Pay Rate	Number Available
\$9.99 or Less	900
\$10.00 - \$11.99	3,300
\$12.00 - \$13.99	1,600
\$14.00 - \$15.99	2,800
\$16.00 - \$17.99	800
\$18.00 - \$19.99	2,600
\$20.00 - \$21.99	1,400
\$22.00 - \$23.99	400
\$24.00 - \$25.99	2,300
\$26.00 - \$27.99	1,000
\$28.00 - \$29.99	700
\$30.00 - \$31.99	900
\$32.00 - \$33.99	200
\$34.00 - \$35.99	700
\$36.00 or More	1,900



DESIRED WAGE RATES PER HOUR BY RANGE
21,500 Underemployed Workers



DESIRED WAGE RATES PER HOUR BY PERCENTILE
21,500 Underemployed Workers



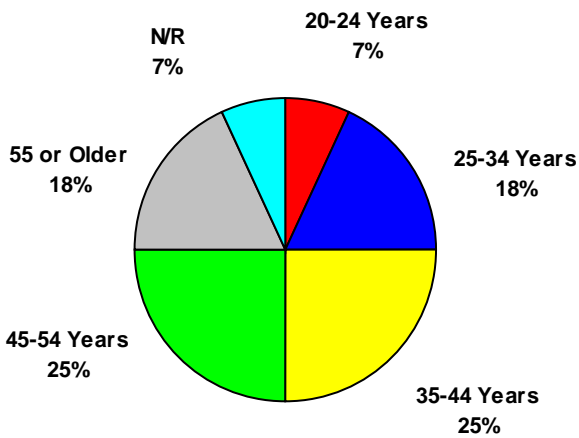
CHARACTERISTICS OF UNDEREMPLOYED WORKERS

The Springfield Area Labor Shed

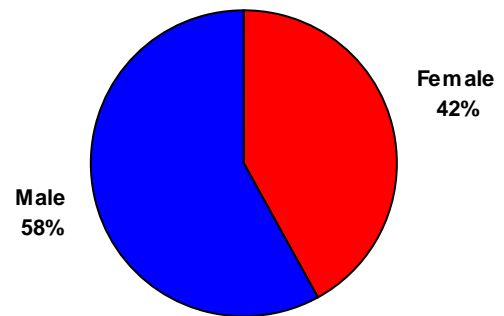
21,500 Underemployed Workers

The following charts provide information on various characteristics of the underemployed workers in the labor shed. **As these data relate solely to those individuals in the labor shed who are underemployed, they will vary from data representative of the population and civilian labor force as a whole.**

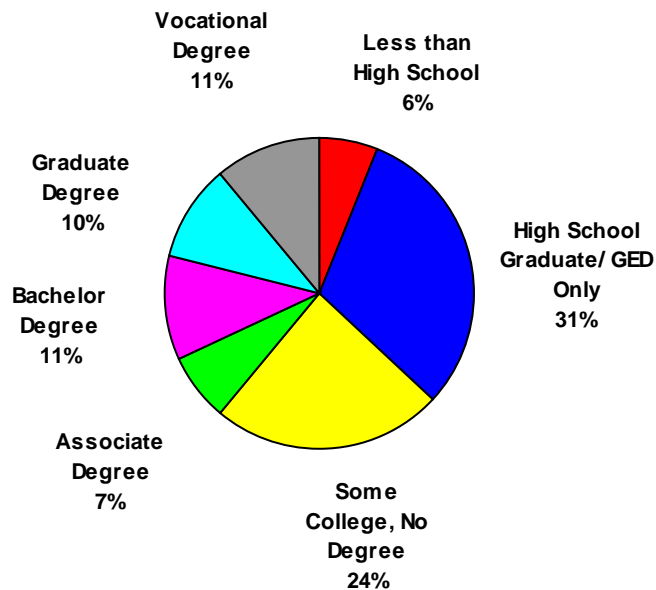
AGE - Average 41 Years



GENDER

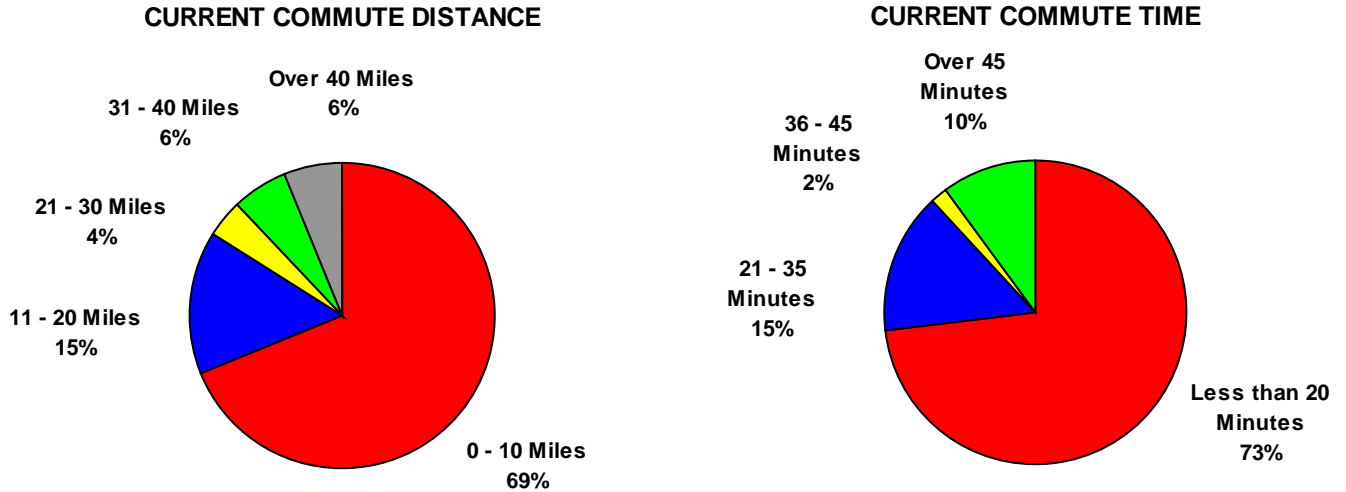


EDUCATION



CHARACTERISTICS OF UNDEREMPLOYED WORKERS

21,500 Underemployed Workers



The average commute time of the underemployed workers in the labor shed is 20 minutes, and the average current commute distance is 11 miles.

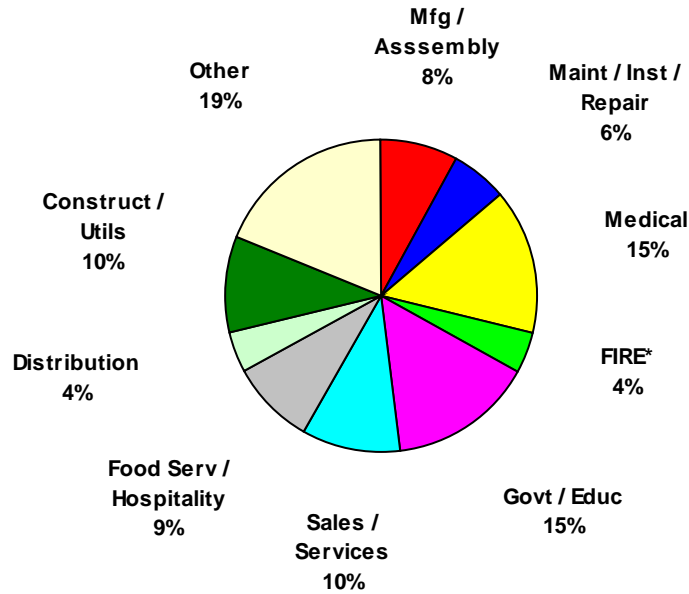
LENGTH OF TIME IN CURRENT JOB



CHARACTERISTICS OF UNDEREMPLOYED WORKERS

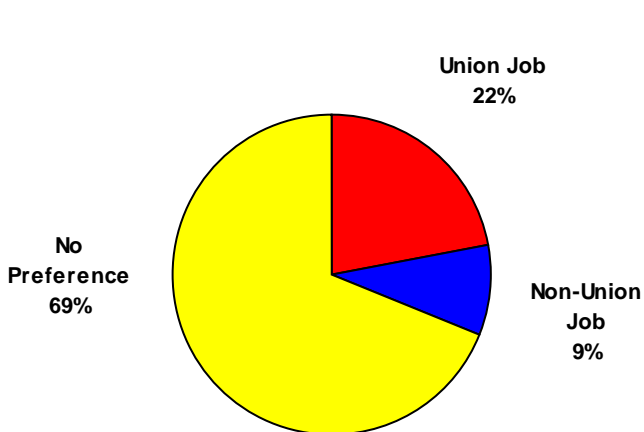
21,500 Underemployed Workers

CURRENT AREA OF EMPLOYMENT

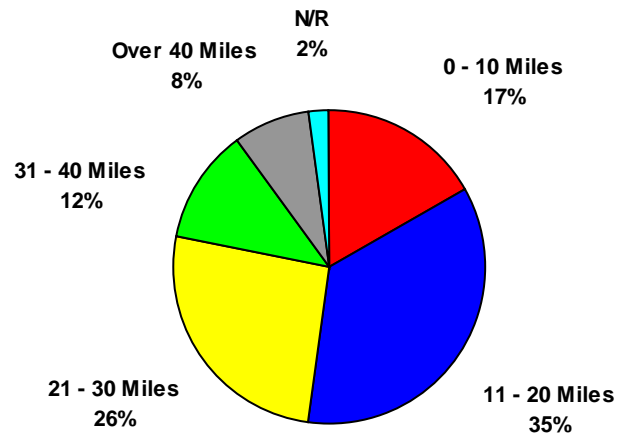


*FIRE – Finance/Insurance/Real Estate

UNION PREFERENCE



MILES WILLING TO COMMUTE Average 21 Miles



EXPERIENCE AND SKILLS – UNDEREMPLOYED WORKERS

21,500 Underemployed Workers

The experience and skills categories used in this report are designed to provide accurate workforce data for employers which fall into one or more of the following four broad groups:

- manufacturing, assembly, fabrication or other industrial operations;
- back office, data processing, call centers, information technology, customer service or sales operations;
- distribution or transportation operations; and,
- biotechnology, pharmaceuticals or medical research operations.

The experience and skills categories are purposefully similar in order to present the most accurate worker availability for operations in one of those four groups and are designed to ensure inclusiveness considering the multitude of tasks and job titles present in most business, government and institutional operations.

The experience chart reports the approximate number of underemployed workers experienced in each category. The chart also gives the percentage of the total number of underemployed experienced in each category and the average number of years of experience in each category. Further, an accompanying chart illustrates the percentage of the total underemployed workers in the labor shed who are experienced in each category and the percent of those who use each category of experience in their current jobs.

Likewise, for the skills categories, the charts illustrate the approximate number of underemployed workers in the labor shed who are skilled in each of the categories, the percent of the total underemployed, and the percent of underemployed workers who use each skills category in their current jobs.

It should be noted that individuals polled normally have experience and skills in multiple categories; therefore, the category number of workers will not total to the number of underemployed, nor will the percentages equal 100%.



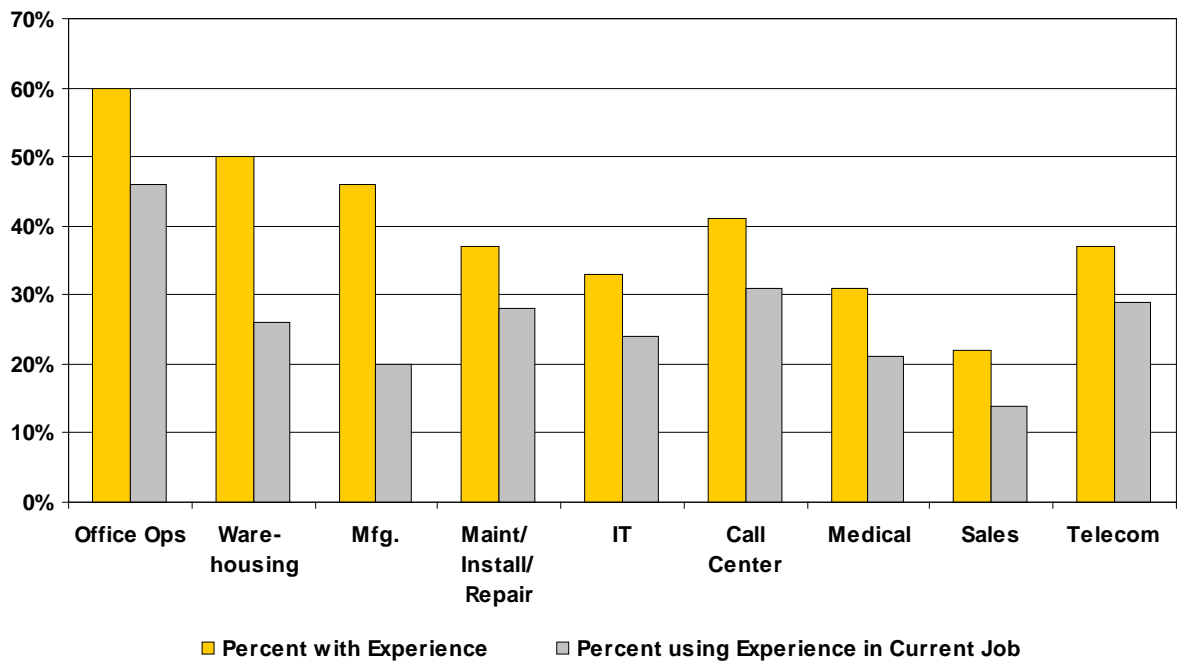
EXPERIENCE OF UNDEREMPLOYED WORKERS

21,500 Underemployed Workers

Experience Category	Number of Workers*	Percentage of Total	Average Years of Experience
Office Operations	12,900	60%	13
Warehouse/Distribution/Transportation	10,800	50%	8
Manufacturing/Assembly/Fabrication	9,900	46%	9
Call Center	8,800	41%	10
Maintenance/Installation/Repair	8,000	37%	12
Telecommunications	8,000	37%	8
Information Technology	7,100	33%	10
Medical/Health Sciences	6,700	31%	8
Sales	4,700	22%	9

* Rounded

EXPERIENCE USED IN CURRENT JOB



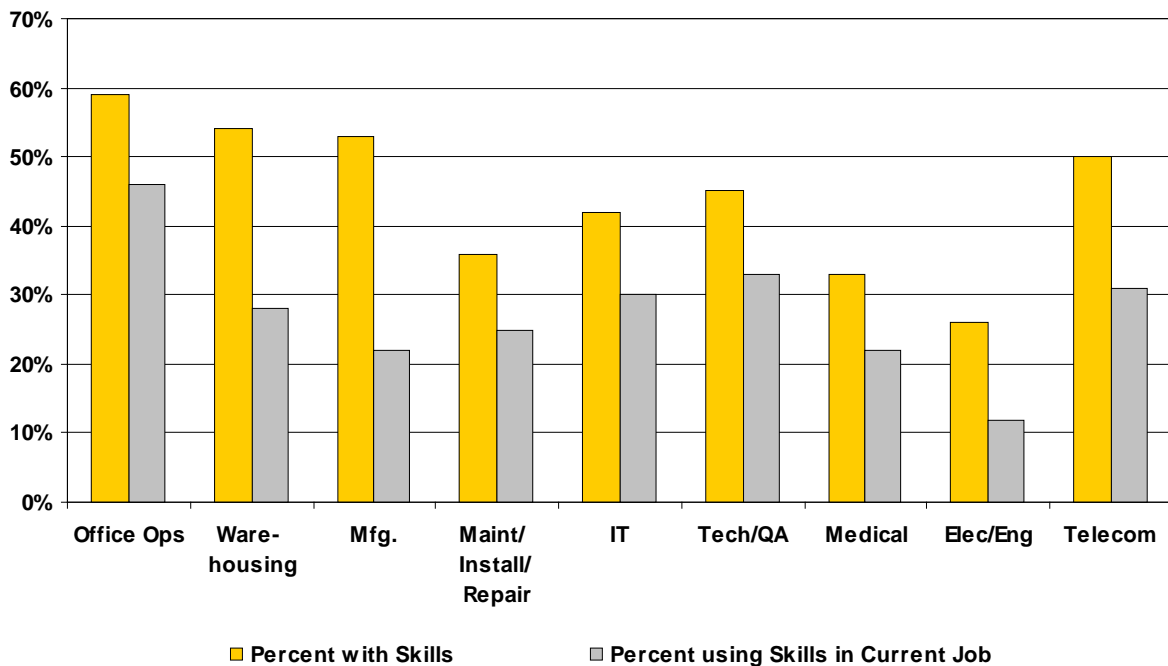
SKILLS OF UNDEREMPLOYED WORKERS

21,500 Underemployed Workers

Skills Category	Number of Workers*	Percentage of Total
Office Operations	12,700	59%
Warehouse/Logistics	11,600	54%
Manufacturing/Assembly/Fabrication	11,400	53%
Telecommunications	10,800	50%
Technician/Quality Assurance	9,700	45%
Information Technology	9,000	42%
Maintenance/Installation/Repair	7,700	36%
Medical/Health Sciences	7,100	33%
Electronics/Engineering	5,600	26%

* Rounded

SKILLS USED IN CURRENT JOB



EXPERIENCE AND SKILLS – UNDEREMPLOYED WORKERS

21,500 Underemployed Workers

The survey respondents were asked to identify the one category of experience in which they felt they were most experienced and, also, the single skills category in which they believed themselves to be most skilled. The charts below reflect the results of these questions.

CATEGORY OF MOST EXPERIENCED

Experience Category	Percentage of Respondents
Office Operations	34%
Maintenance/Installation/Repair	18%
Manufacturing/Assembly/Fabrication	14%
Warehouse/Distribution/Transportation	12%
Medical/Health Sciences	11%
Information Technology	3%
Sales	2%
Telecommunications	2%
Call Center	2%
N/R	2%

CATEGORY OF MOST SKILLED

Skills Category	Percentage of Respondents
Office Operations	33%
Maintenance/Installation/Repair	14%
Manufacturing/Assembly/Fabrication	12%
Medical/Health Sciences	10%
Warehouse/Logistics	10%
Telecommunications	6%
Information Technology	4%
Electronics/Engineering	3%
Technician/Quality Assurance	3%
N/R	5%



FACTORS AFFECTING JOB DESIRABILITY

21,500 Underemployed Workers

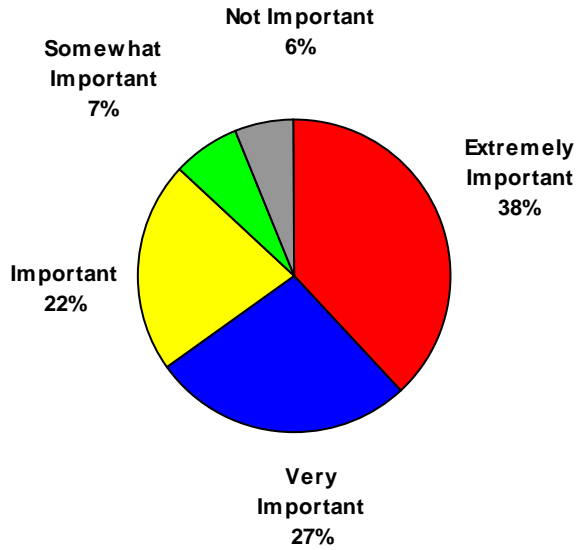
In an effort to identify those factors most important to the Springfield area’s underemployed workers relative to consideration of an employer’s desirability and a potential job change, the respondents were asked to rate the following job factors from “extremely important” to “not important”.



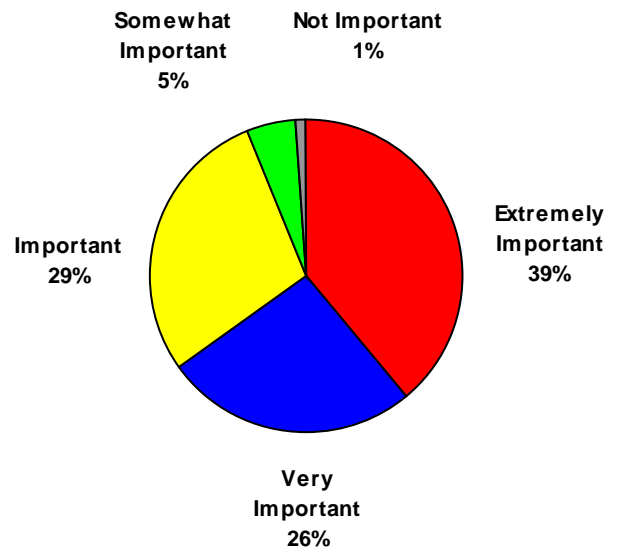
FACTORS AFFECTING JOB DESIRABILITY

21,500 Underemployed Workers

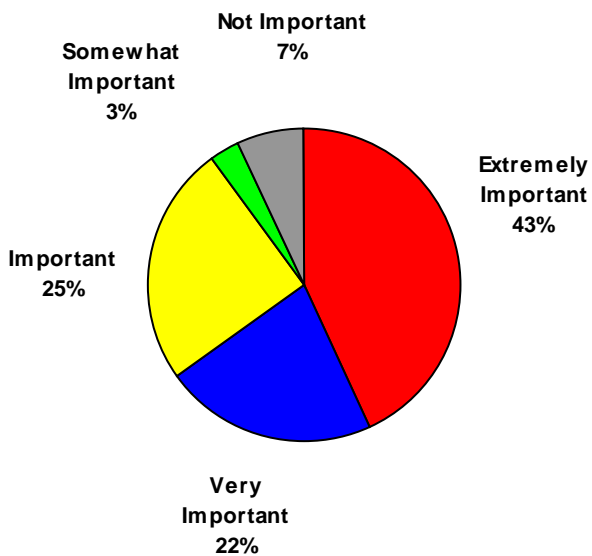
PHYSICAL WORKING ENVIRONMENT



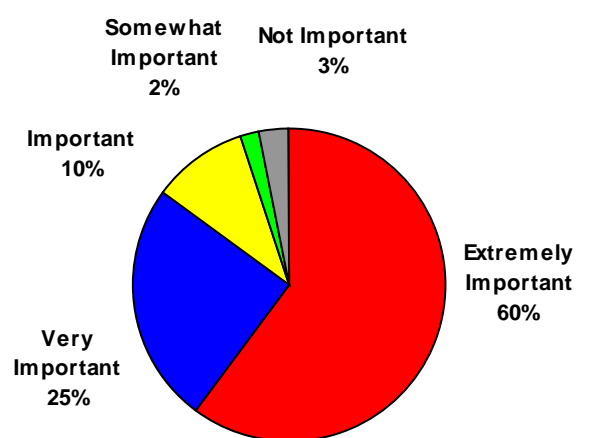
PAID TRAINING PROGRAMS



FLEXIBLE WORK SCHEDULE



OPPORTUNITY FOR ADVANCEMENT



INTEREST IN TRAINING COURSES

21,500 Underemployed Workers

A component was added to this survey which was designed to determine possible interest in training courses on the part of the underemployed workers in the Springfield workforce. In the table that follows, it should be noted that many of the respondents indicated interest in more than one program; therefore, the percent total will not equal 100.

Type of Training Course	Number of Workers*	Percentage of Total
Computer Programming	8,800	41%
Human Resources	8,600	40%
Health Care	8,400	39%
Computer Software Applications	8,200	38%
Industrial Machine Operations	6,700	31%
Technical Trades	6,500	30%
Construction Trades	6,500	30%
Computer Maintenance or Repair	6,200	29%
Real Estate or Insurance	6,000	28%
Commercial Vehicle Operations	4,300	20%
GED or Basic Reading, Writing, Arithmetic	4,300	20%
Restaurant or Retail Management	4,100	19%
Food Service or Hospitality	3,900	18%
Auto or Maintenance Mechanics	3,700	17%
ESL (English as a Second Language)	3,400	16%

* Rounded

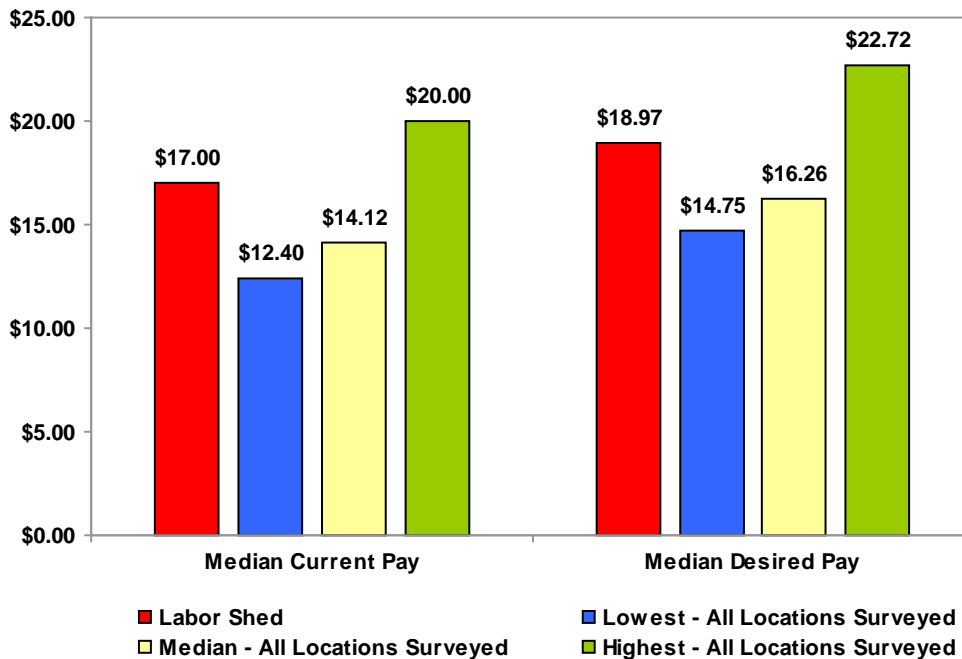


NATIONAL COMPARISONS OF UNDEREMPLOYED WORKFORCE

This section of the report provides comparisons of the pay rates, experience and skills of the labor shed’s underemployed workforce with the underemployed workforces in other areas previously surveyed by The Pathfinders. A prospect company considering the Springfield region as a location will judge its workforce on a comparative basis. The comparative data for other locations used in the following charts reflect information accumulated over the past eighteen months. The Pathfinders maintains a continuing database of surveyed counties and communities. In the charts, the Springfield region is referred to as “labor shed”.

The chart below illustrates the median current and desired wages of the underemployed workers in the Springfield labor shed as compared to those underemployed workers in all locations surveyed by The Pathfinders over the past eighteen months.

COMPARISON OF MEDIAN CURRENT / DESIRED WAGES (per hour)

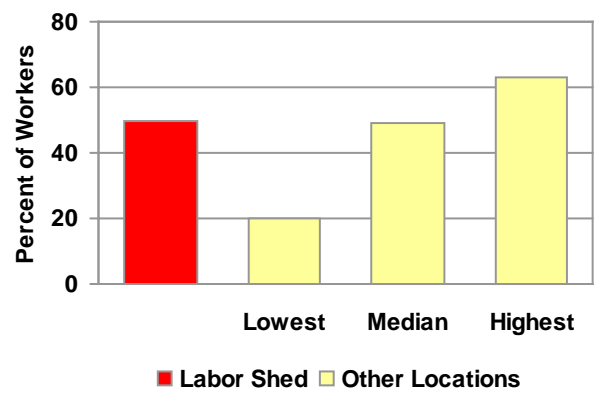


**COMPARISON OF EXPERIENCE
UNDEREMPLOYED WORKERS
The Springfield Area /
Locations Surveyed Over the Past 18 Months**

OFFICE



**WAREHOUSE / DISTRIBUTION /
TRANSPORTATION**



**MANUFACTURING / ASSEMBLY /
FABRICATION**



**MEDICAL /
HEALTH SCIENCES**



**COMPARISON OF EXPERIENCE
UNDEREMPLOYED WORKERS
The Springfield Area /
Locations Surveyed Over the Past 18 Months**

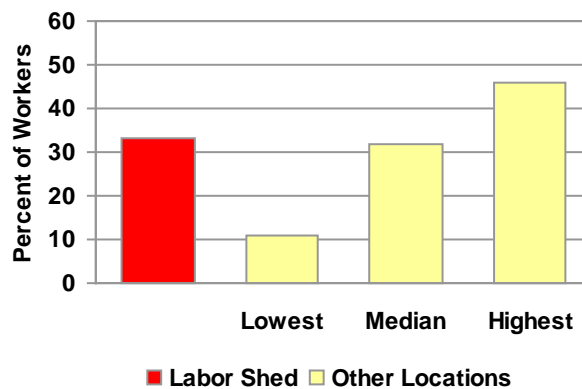
**MAINTENANCE /
INSTALLATION / REPAIR**



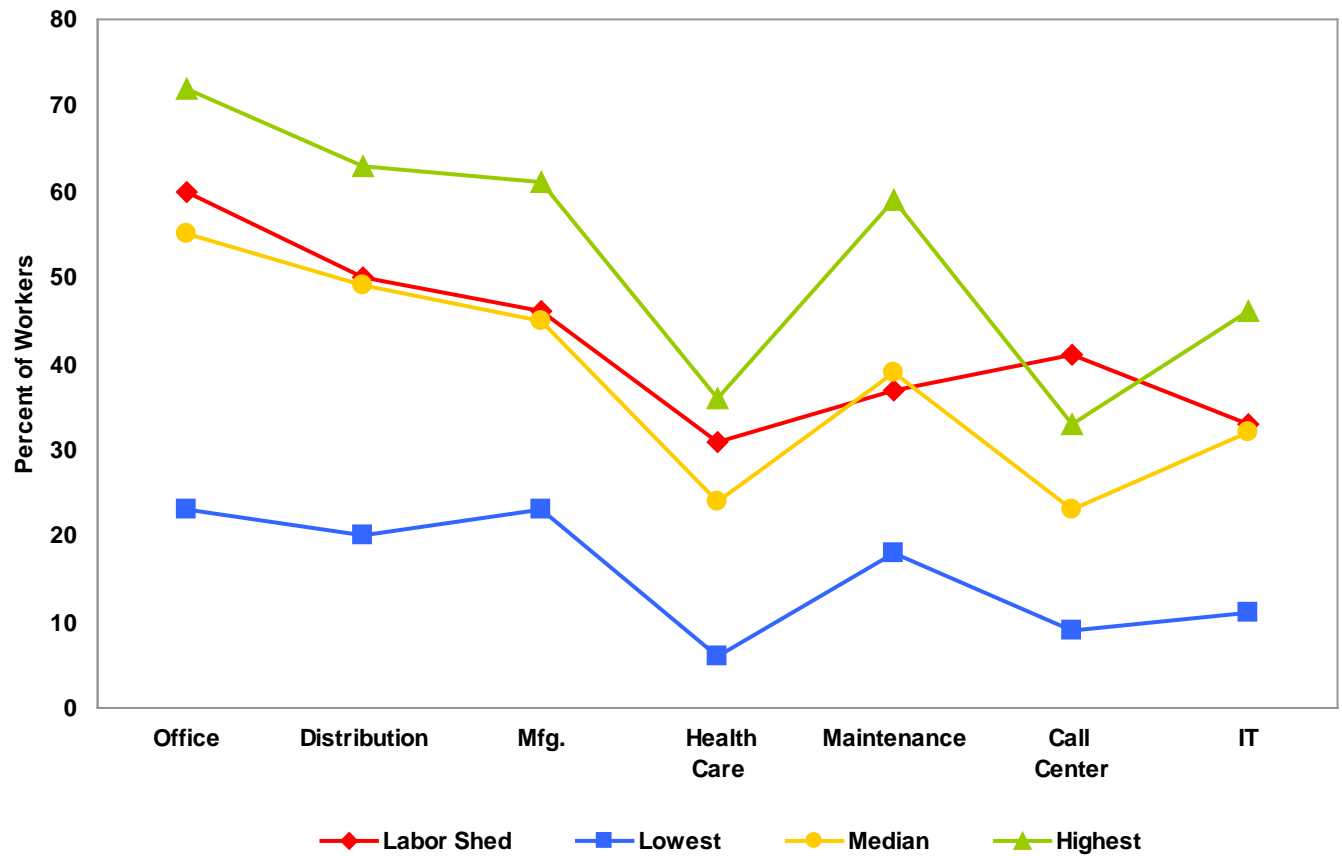
CALL CENTER



INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY



**SUMMARY COMPARISON OF EXPERIENCE
UNDEREMPLOYED WORKERS
The Springfield Area /
Locations Surveyed Over the Past 18 Months**



COMPARISON OF SKILLS
UNDEREMPLOYED WORKERS
The Springfield Area /
Locations Surveyed Over the Past 18 Months

OFFICE



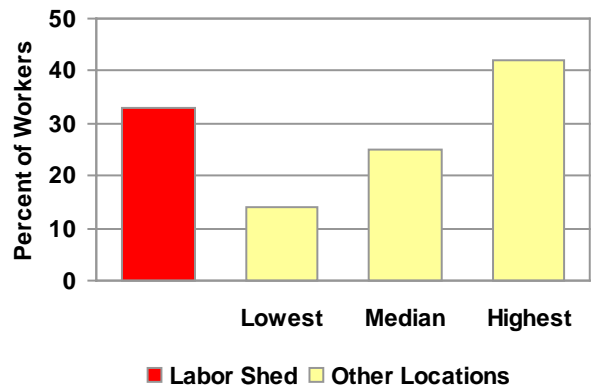
WAREHOUSE / LOGISTICS



MANUFACTURING / ASSEMBLY / FABRICATION



MEDICAL / HEALTH SCIENCES



COMPARISON OF SKILLS UNDEREMPLOYED WORKERS

The Springfield Area /
Locations Surveyed Over the Past 18 Months

MAINTENANCE / INSTALLATION / REPAIR



TECHNICIAN / QUALITY ASSURANCE



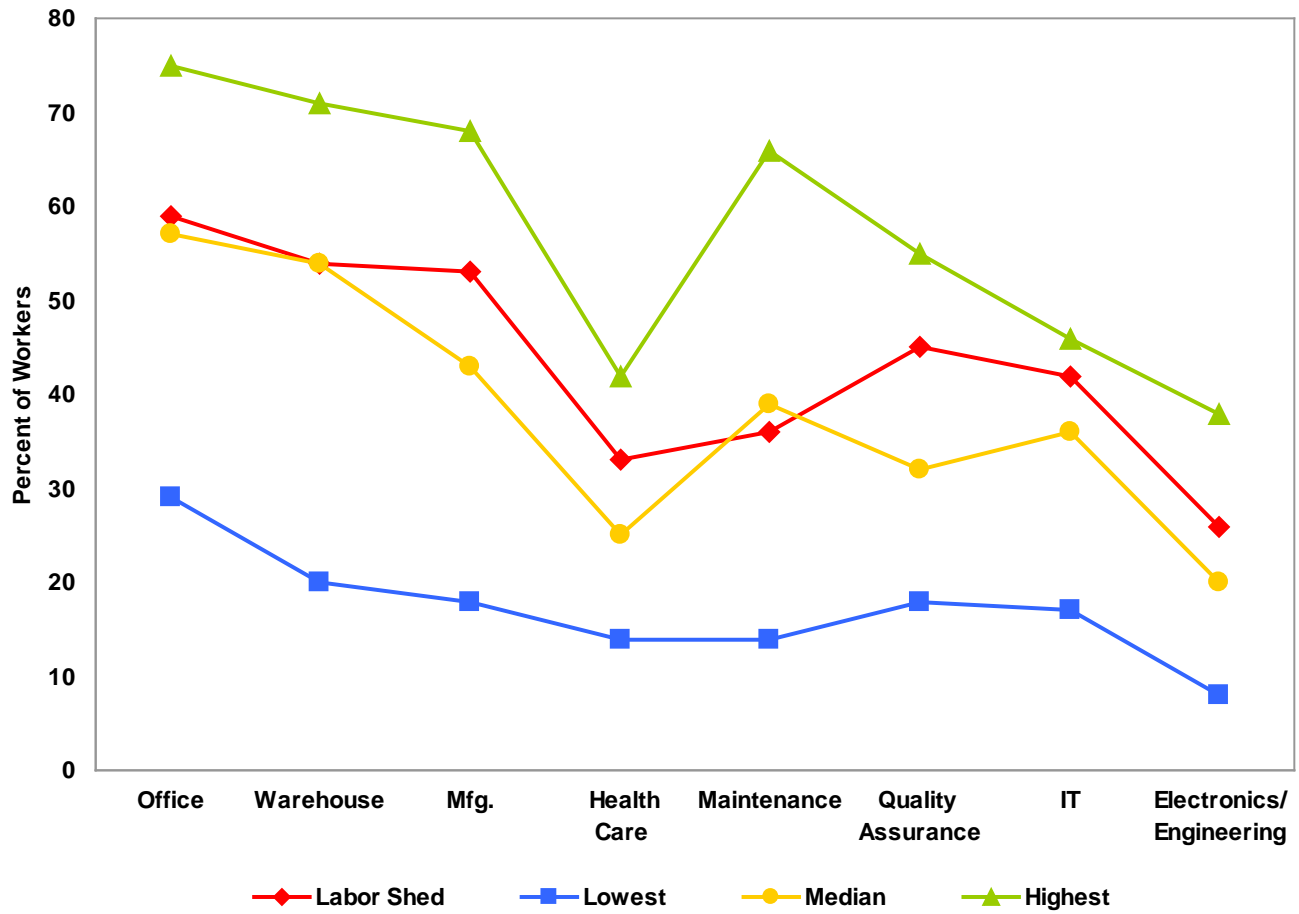
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY



ELECTRONICS / ENGINEERING



SUMMARY COMPARISON OF SKILLS
UNDEREMPLOYED WORKERS
The Springfield Area /
Locations Surveyed Over the Past 18 Months



ASSESSMENT OF THE UNEMPLOYED WORKFORCE

The Springfield Area Labor Shed

This report documents two groups of unemployed individuals in the Springfield area labor shed who would be available workers for a new or expanding business. The groups are classified as:

- Individuals who are actively seeking work
- Individuals who are considering re-entering the workforce

Published statistics document 12,100 unemployed workers in the labor shed who are actively seeking work. This number could possibly be higher due to individuals looking for work who are not on the roles of the state unemployment agencies. Survey results suggest that an additional 2,100 people, who are not currently employed or actively seeking work, would consider re-entering the workforce.

In total, the labor shed has approximately 14,200 unemployed individuals who would be considered potential workers for a new or expanding operation.

UNEMPLOYED INDIVIDUALS

Number of unemployed, actively seeking work individuals	12,100
Number of unemployed individuals who would considering re-entering the workforce	2,100
Total Number of Unemployed Individuals Available for Employers	14,200

The determinations for these two segments of the workforce have a larger statistical variance than that for the underemployed.

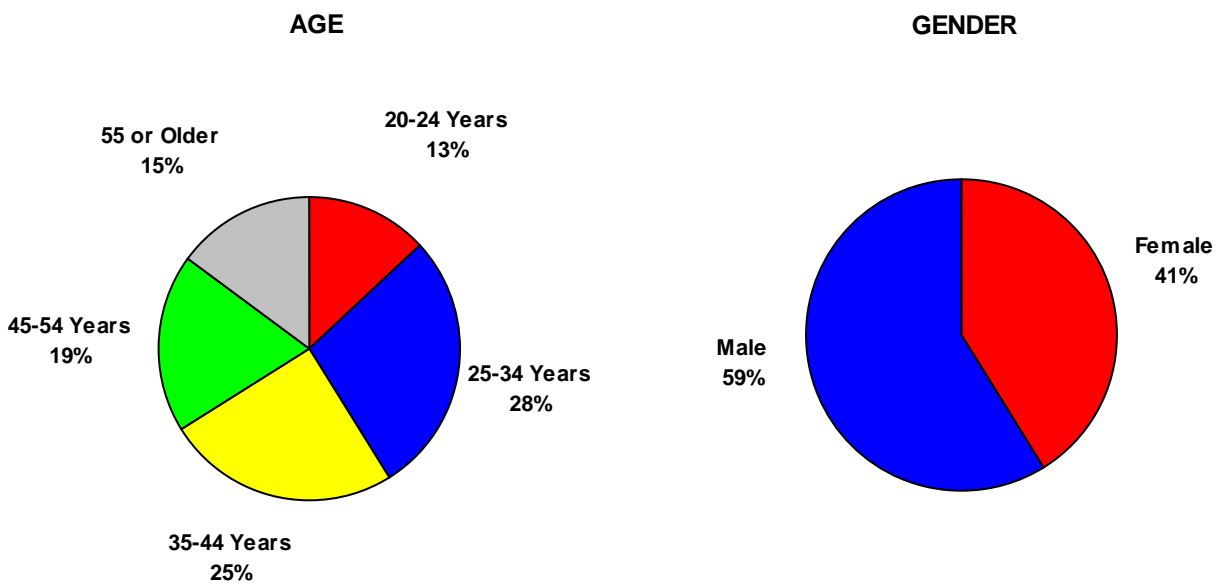


**CHARACTERISTICS OF UNEMPLOYED INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE
ACTIVELY SEEKING WORK**

12,100 Workers

According to survey results, the following charts provide information on those unemployed workers in the labor shed who are actively seeking work. **As these data relate solely to those individuals in the labor shed who are unemployed, they will vary from data representative of the population and civilian labor force as a whole.**

In the Springfield labor shed, according to published sources, there are approximately 12,100 individuals who are actively seeking work. Survey results indicate the average age of these individuals is 38 years.



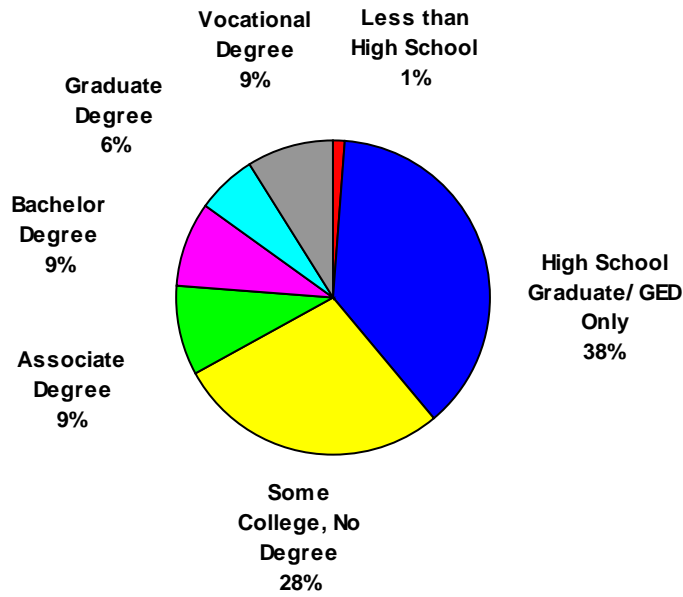
The median desired pay rate of the individuals who are unemployed, actively seeking work is \$12.00 per hour. These available workers have been out of the workforce for an average of 12 months and are willing to commute an average of 22 miles for a job.



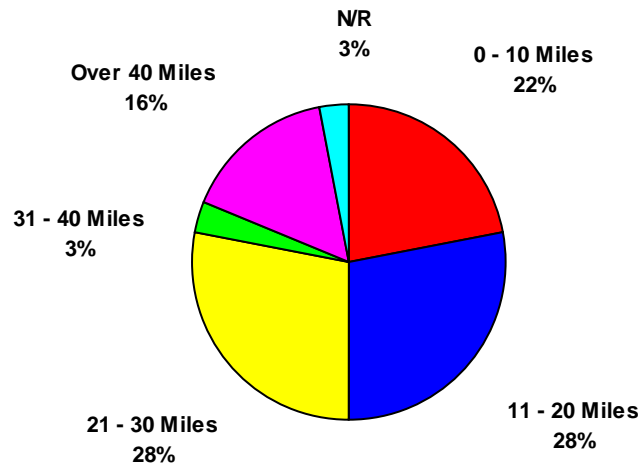
CHARACTERISTICS OF UNEMPLOYED INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE ACTIVELY SEEKING WORK

12,100 Workers

EDUCATION



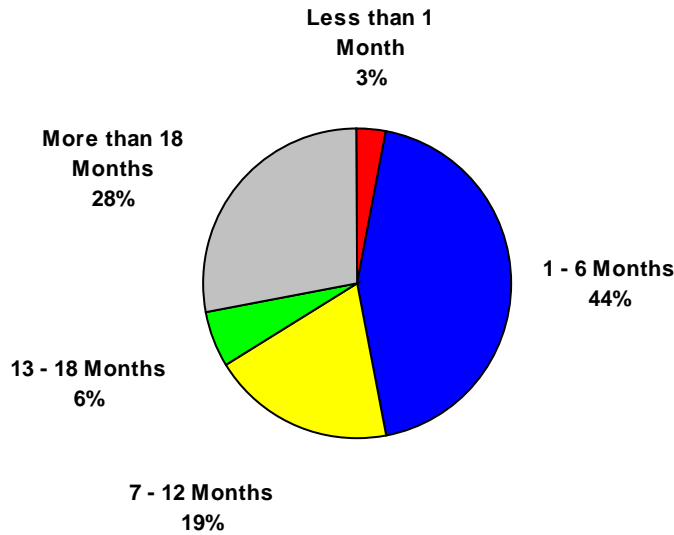
MILES WILLING TO COMMUTE – Average 22 Miles



**CHARACTERISTICS OF UNEMPLOYED INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE
ACTIVELY SEEKING WORK**

12,100 Workers

MONTHS OUT OF WORKFORCE



REASON FOR BEING OUT OF WORKFORCE

REASON	Percentage of Respondents
Laid Off / Job Eliminated	31%
Medical/Disability	22%
Student	13%
Personal Choice / Stay-At-Home	12%
No Jobs / Discouraged	10%
Company Closed / Relocated	9%
Other	3%



**CHARACTERISTICS OF UNEMPLOYED INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE
ACTIVELY SEEKING WORK**

12,100 Workers

Experience Category	Number of Individuals*	Percentage of Total
Warehouse/Distribution/Transportation	7,600	63%
Manufacturing/Assembly/Fabrication	6,100	50%
Call Center	5,700	47%
Office Operations	5,300	44%
Telecommunications	4,100	34%
Maintenance/Installation/Repair	3,800	31%
Medical/Health Sciences	3,800	31%
Information Technology	3,000	25%
Sales	2,700	22%

The similarities between the experience and skills categories are designed to ensure inclusiveness considering the multitude of tasks and job titles present in most business, government and institutional operations. **It should be noted that individuals polled normally have experience and/or skills in multiple categories.**

Skills Category	Number of Individuals*	Percentage of Total
Warehouse/Logistics	6,400	53%
Manufacturing/Assembly/Fabrication	6,400	53%
Office Operations	5,700	47%
Maintenance/Installation/Repair	5,000	41%
Technician/Quality Assurance	4,600	38%
Telecommunications	4,500	37%
Electronics/Engineering	3,800	31%
Information Technology	3,400	28%
Medical/Health Sciences	3,400	28%

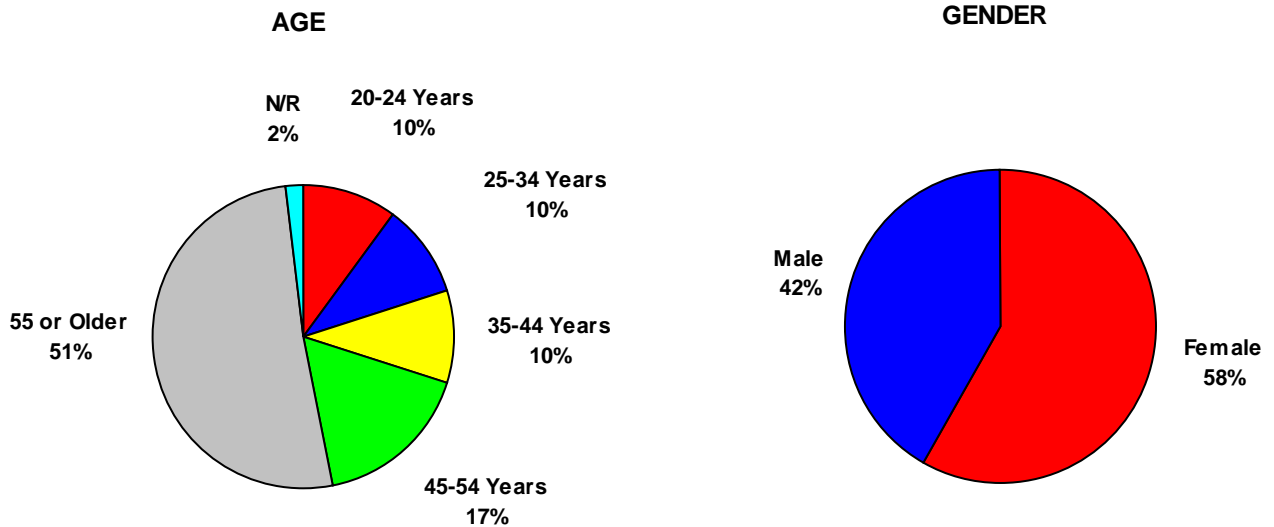
* Rounded



**ASSESSMENT OF INDIVIDUALS WHO
WOULD CONSIDER RE-ENTERING THE WORKFORCE
2,100 Potential Workers**

The following charts provide information on that segment of unemployed individuals in the labor shed who would consider re-entering the workforce. **As these data relate solely to those individuals in the labor shed who are unemployed, they will vary from data representative of the population and civilian labor force as a whole.**

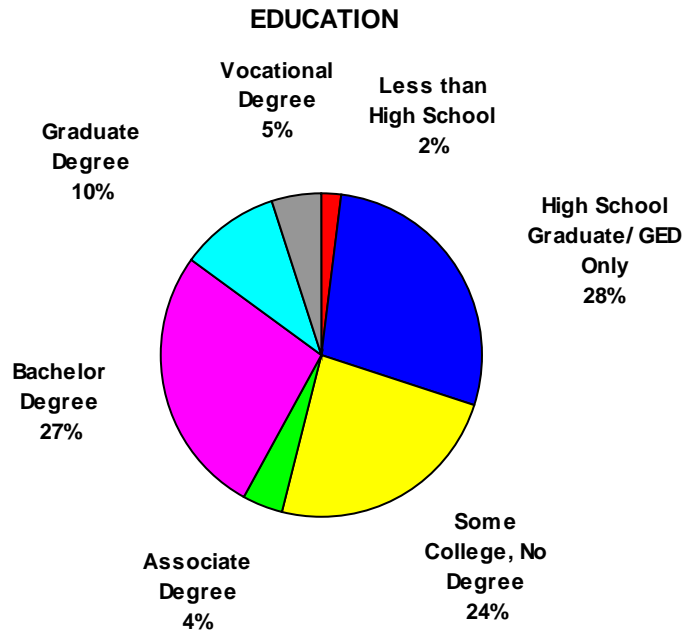
In the Springfield labor shed, there are approximately 2,100 individuals who are currently unemployed, not actively seeking work, but would consider re-entering the workforce. Survey results indicate the average age of these individuals is 42 years.



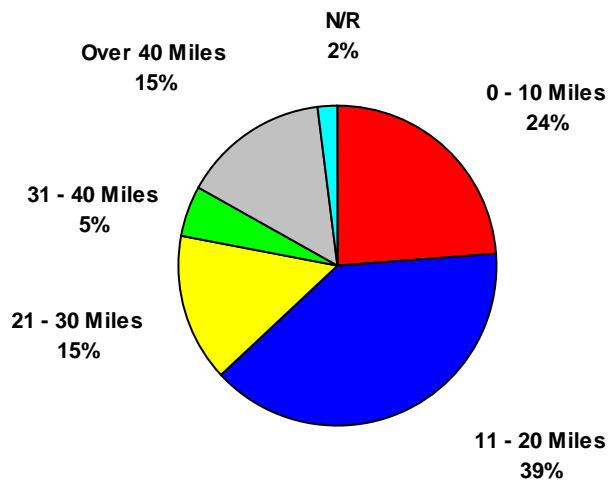
The median desired pay rate of the individuals who would consider re-entering the workforce is \$12.00 per hour. These potential workers have been out of the workforce for an average of 19 months and are willing to commute an average of 20 miles for a job.



**CHARACTERISTICS OF INDIVIDUALS WHO
WOULD CONSIDER RE-ENTERING THE WORKFORCE**
2,100 Potential Workers



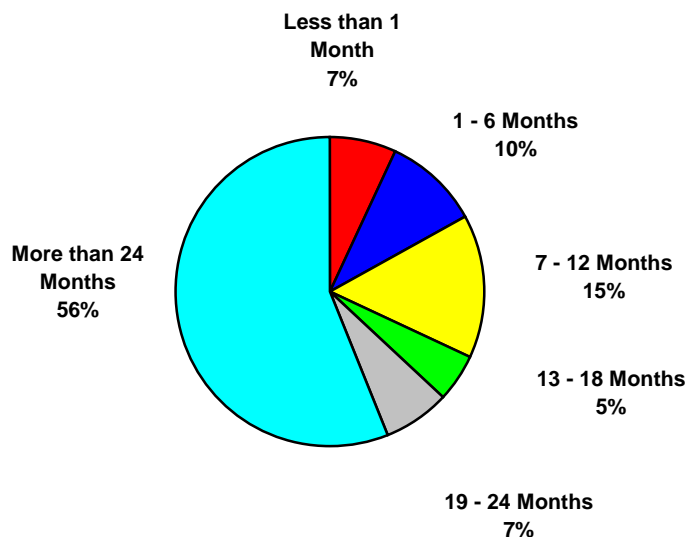
MILES WILLING TO COMMUTE – Average 20 Miles



CHARACTERISTICS OF INDIVIDUALS WHO WOULD CONSIDER RE-ENTERING THE WORKFORCE

2,100 Potential Workers

MONTHS OUT OF WORKFORCE



REASON FOR BEING OUT OF WORKFORCE

REASON	Percentage of Respondents
Retired or Close to Retirement	29%
Medical/Disability	27%
Personal Choice / Stay-At-Home	17%
Laid Off / Job Eliminated	10%
Student	10%
No Jobs / Discouraged	5%
Company Closed / Relocated	2%



**CHARACTERISTICS OF INDIVIDUALS WHO
WOULD CONSIDER RE-ENTERING THE WORKFORCE
2,100 Potential Workers**

Experience Category	Number of Individuals*	Percentage of Total
Office Operations	1,400	66%
Warehouse/Distribution/Transportation	1,000	46%
Manufacturing/Assembly/Fabrication	800	37%
Medical/Health Sciences	700	34%
Telecommunications	600	27%
Maintenance/Installation/Repair	500	24%
Information Technology	500	24%
Call Center	400	17%
Sales	200	10%

The similarities between the experience and skills categories are designed to ensure inclusiveness considering the multitude of tasks and job titles present in most business, government and institutional operations. **It should be noted that individuals polled normally have experience and/or skills in multiple categories.**

Skills Category	Number of Individuals*	Percentage of Total
Office Operations	1,500	71%
Information Technology	1,000	49%
Telecommunications	800	39%
Manufacturing/Assembly/Fabrication	700	34%
Warehouse/Logistics	700	32%
Technician/Quality Assurance	600	29%
Medical/Health Sciences	600	29%
Maintenance/Installation/Repair	500	22%
Electronics/Engineering	300	15%

* Rounded



EMPLOYERS' VIEWS AND RATINGS OF THE SPRINGFIELD AREA TOTAL WORKFORCE

In developing a profile of existing workers in the Springfield region, The Pathfinders considered such factors as labor availability, productivity, attitudes, costs, and education. The analysis was based upon interviews conducted with senior management and human resources professionals from companies located in the labor shed. The employers interviewed represented area businesses in the fields of health care, government and education, insurance, manufacturing and others. Both union and non-union operations participated in the interviews, and the length of time the companies have been in the area ranged from less than 20 years to over 100 years. The combined total number of employees as reported by the participating companies was approximately 17,000.

As determined from the employer interviews, the tables below reflect the top five methods used to recruit hourly and salaried workers in the Springfield region and the percent of employers utilizing each method. Employers may use multiple recruitment methods.

RECRUITMENT METHODS

Recruiting Methods – Hourly Workers	% of Employers
Internet	74%
Job Board/Sign	42%
Word of Mouth	42%
Colleges	32%
Newspaper Ads	32%

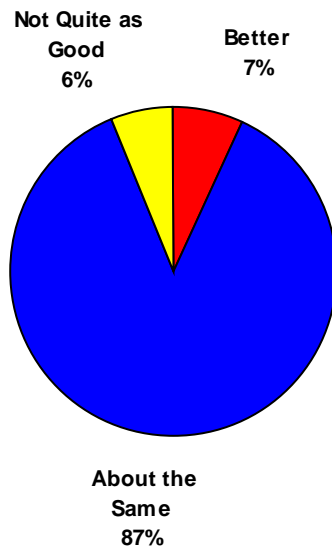
Recruiting Methods – Salaried Workers	% of Employers
Internet	84%
Job Board/Sign	37%
Word of Mouth	32%
Recruiters	26%
Colleges	21%



EMPLOYERS' VIEWS AND RATINGS OF THE SPRINGFIELD AREA TOTAL WORKFORCE

79% of the employers interviewed stated their companies had operations in other regions of the United States. Of these employers, those familiar with the workforces in those other locations reported their Springfield area operations were comparable to or better than the other regions in terms of profitability and production.

WORKFORCE COMPARISON WITH OTHER LOCATIONS



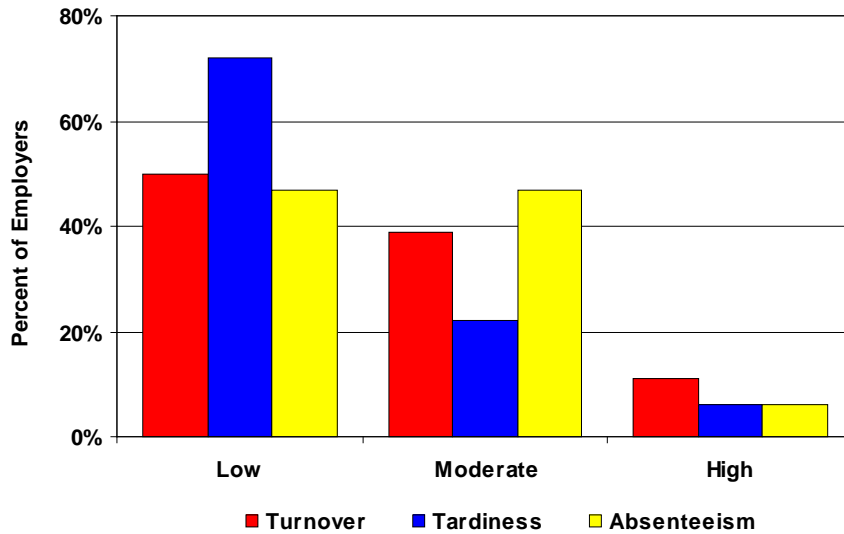
Based upon the experience of The Pathfinders in evaluating labor forces in numerous locations, a definite correlation between productivity, absenteeism, tardiness, turnover, and substance abuse appears to exist. That correlation goes beyond the fact that an absent worker is obviously unproductive. Rather, those factors are indicative of an employee's attitude toward the job.

The employers surveyed in this study were asked to rate turnover, tardiness and absenteeism among their workers as "Low", "Moderate" or "High". Further, they were surveyed as to their substance abuse testing practices and asked to rate substance abuse among the area workforce. The charts on the following pages illustrate the percent of employers' ratings for these and other factors, including educational facilities, worker productivity and reliability, teamwork and basic skills.



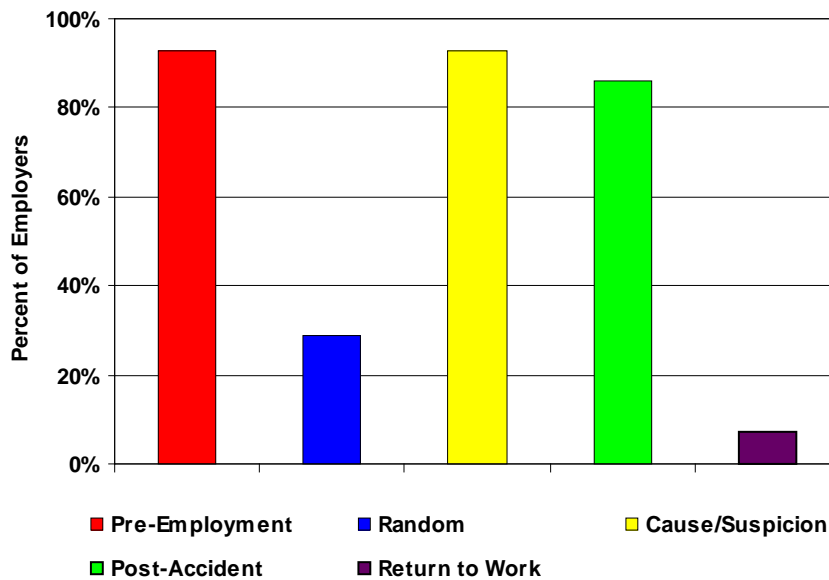
EMPLOYERS' VIEWS AND RATINGS OF THE SPRINGFIELD AREA TOTAL WORKFORCE

TURNOVER / TARDINESS / ABSENTEEISM



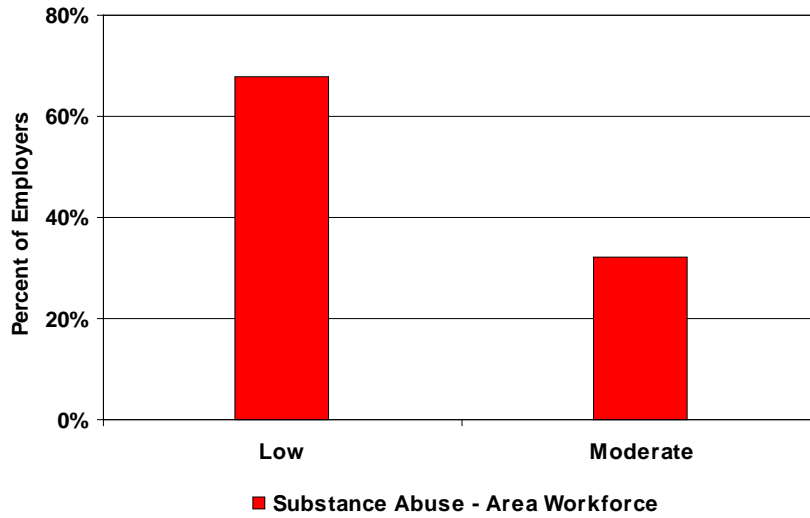
In the Springfield labor shed, 74% of the employers interviewed stated their companies tested for substance abuse, using one or more of the following practices:

SUBSTANCE ABUSE TESTING PRACTICES



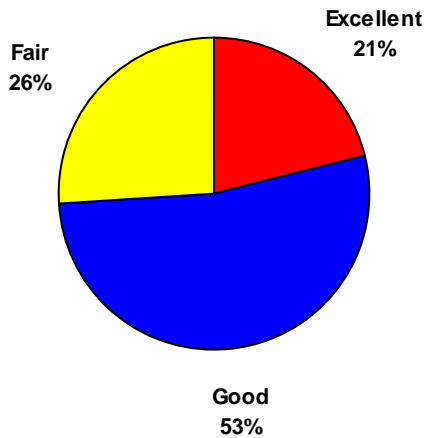
EMPLOYERS' VIEWS AND RATINGS OF THE SPRINGFIELD AREA TOTAL WORKFORCE

SUBSTANCE ABUSE RATING – AREA WORKFORCE

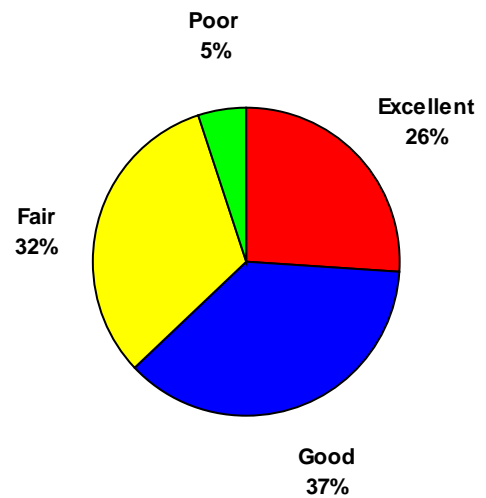


Further, 89% of the employers surveyed completed criminal background checks on potential employees, and 74% checked for valid drivers' licenses.

WORKER PRODUCTIVITY

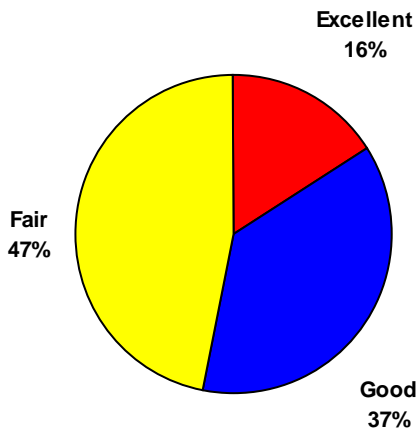


WORKER RELIABILITY

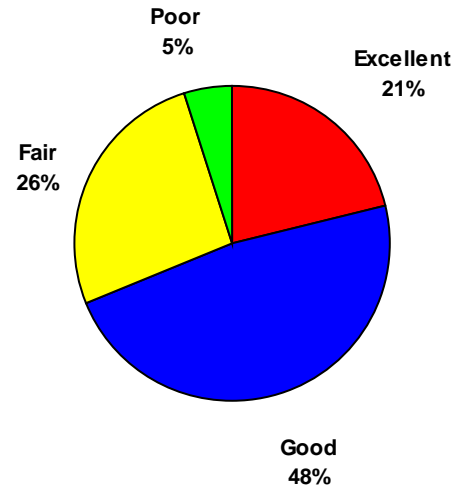


EMPLOYERS' VIEWS AND RATINGS OF THE SPRINGFIELD AREA TOTAL WORKFORCE

WORKER ATTITUDES

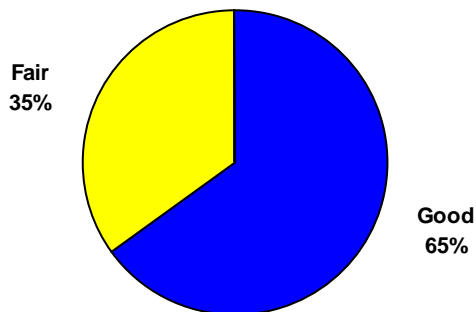


TEAMWORK SKILLS

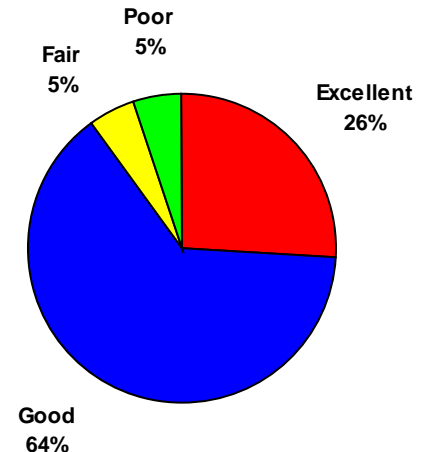


The educational competencies of employees are additional factors used to evaluate an area's labor force. In the Springfield area, 65% of the employers interviewed rated the local public schools as "Good", and 90% rated the local colleges, community colleges and technical/trade schools as "Good" to "Excellent". Ratings for basic skills and other factors are also shown.

LOCAL PUBLIC SCHOOLS



**LOCAL COLLEGES, COMMUNITY COLLEGES
AND TECHNICAL/TRADE SCHOOLS**

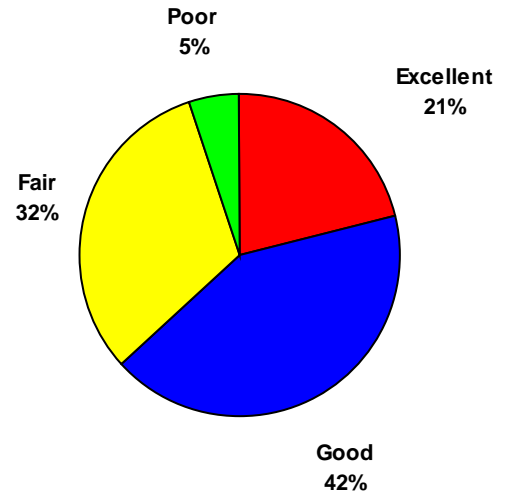


EMPLOYERS' VIEWS AND RATINGS OF THE SPRINGFIELD AREA TOTAL WORKFORCE

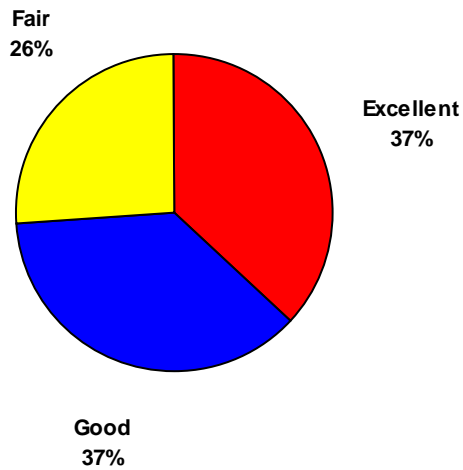
READING SKILLS



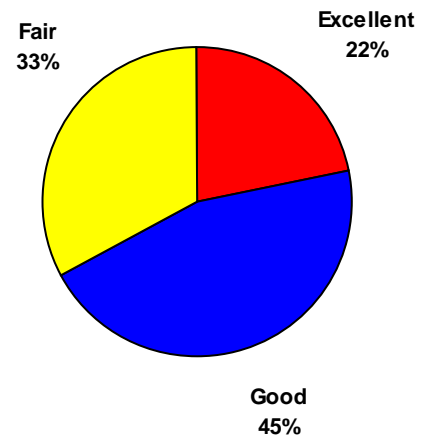
WRITING SKILLS



COMPUTER SKILLS

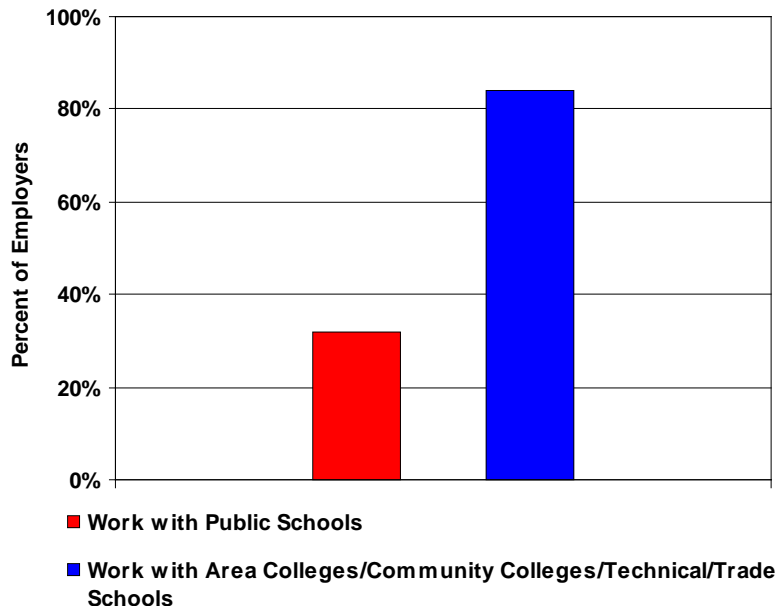


MATH SKILLS

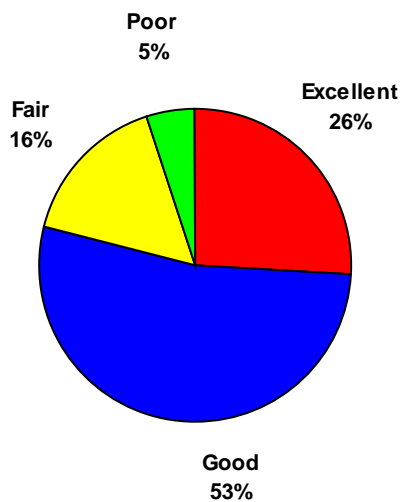


EMPLOYERS' VIEWS AND RATINGS OF THE SPRINGFIELD AREA TOTAL WORKFORCE

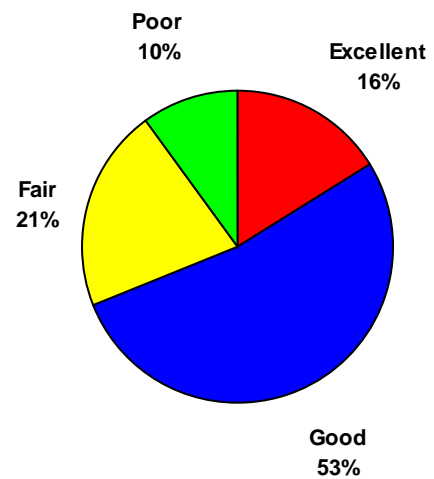
Additionally, many of the employers interviewed stated their companies worked with the area educational institutions in terms of apprenticeships, internships or other training programs.



WORKER ENTRY LEVEL SKILLS

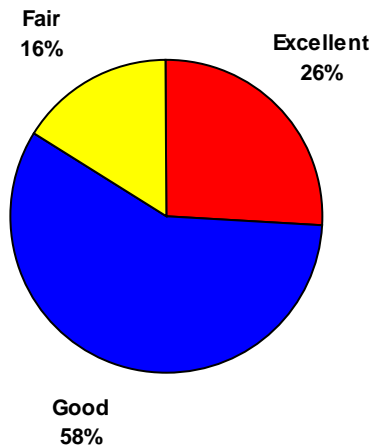


JOB READINESS SKILLS

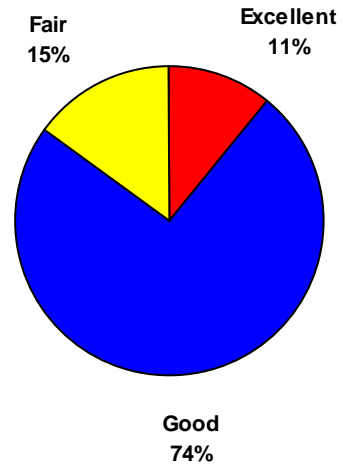


EMPLOYERS' VIEWS AND RATINGS OF THE SPRINGFIELD AREA TOTAL WORKFORCE

WORKER TRAINABILITY

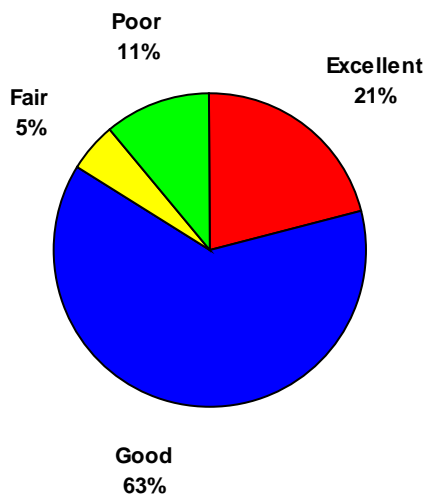


WORKFORCE OVERALL RATING

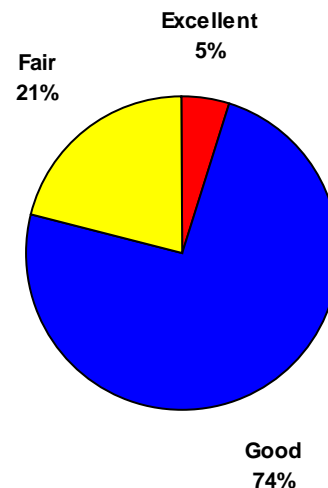


Further, the employers who were interviewed gave the following ratings to the area's business climate in terms of such factors as support and communication and the area's overall quality of life. In addition, the employers offered their opinions on the availability of labor in the area.

AREA BUSINESS CLIMATE

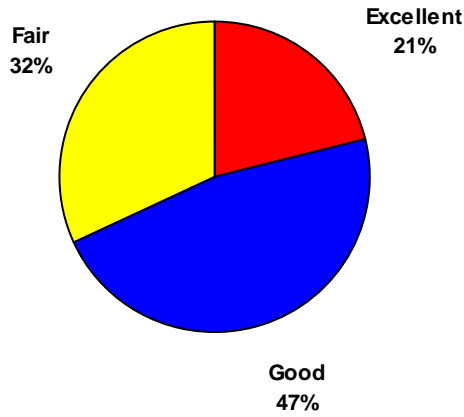


AREA QUALITY OF LIFE

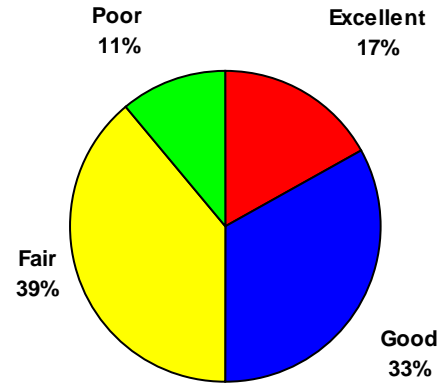


EMPLOYERS' VIEWS AND RATINGS OF THE SPRINGFIELD AREA TOTAL WORKFORCE

SKILLED WORKERS AVAILABILITY



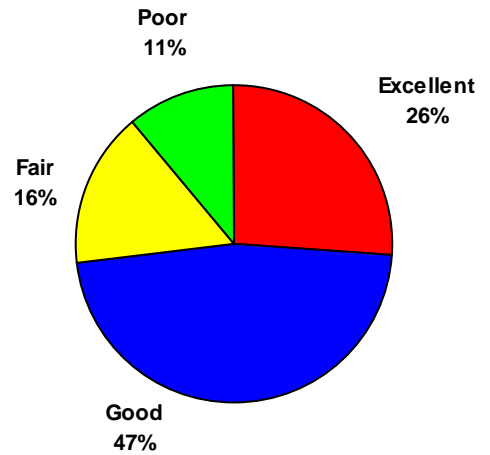
TECHNICAL WORKERS AVAILABILITY



PROFESSIONAL WORKERS AVAILABILITY



UNSKILLED WORKERS AVAILABILITY



EMPLOYERS' VIEWS AND RATINGS OF THE SPRINGFIELD AREA TOTAL WORKFORCE

Employers in the Springfield area were interviewed as to their opinions relating to the strengths of local colleges, community colleges and technical/trade schools, as well as any gaps which might exist in their offerings that affect area workers. Also, the employers were queried concerning training needed for current workers.

When asked about the strengths of the local colleges, community colleges and technical/trade schools, numerous very positive comments were made concerning the institutions' abilities to equip students with the skills necessary to enter the workforce. Also cited as a strength was the cooperation of the educational institutions with local companies for purposes of determining types of training and specialized skills/trades programs, as well as networking with students and posting job positions. Selected comments made by the employers interviewed include:

"They provide strong basic skills that prepare students for real world jobs."

"They work with local companies to learn what they need for future graduates."

"They have a good understanding of the types of jobs that need to be filled and they provide that type of education."

"Varied curriculum, affordability and great locations. Provide better trained workers. Provide better life skills."

"Individual attention/smaller classes, wide variety of training and education options, fairly-priced and many have a good presence in the community at large."

"Their training programs are perfect for the entry level position openings."

"They identify the skills employers need and ready people for these jobs."

"The information being taught is information they will use in the workplace."

"They do an excellent job teaching the disciplines they need for the workforce."

"They have programs designed specifically for the jobs we need to fill."



EMPLOYERS' VIEWS AND RATINGS OF THE SPRINGFIELD AREA TOTAL WORKFORCE

In terms of gaps or needs that exist in the offerings of local higher education institutions that affect area workers, varied answers were given by the employers who were interviewed. Areas related to work ethics; career planning, including realistic salary expectations; and financial and placement assistance were cited as needs/gaps, as well as courses in specific industries such as engineering, office management, and medical occupational programs. Additionally, the need to keep current with the ever-changing field of information technology and computers in the workplace was reported. Further, more internships and more practical experience was reported as being needed by the participating employers.

Finally, the participating employers were asked to describe the types of training needed for their current workers. All of the employers interviewed responded to this question, with communications, soft skills, work habits/ethics being reported most frequently. These types of skills include such areas as teamwork, professionalism, conflict management, time management and initiative. Many employers mentioned more than one training need; therefore, the percentages will not add to 100.

Training Needed for Current Workers	% of Employers
Communications	79%
Work Habits/Ethics	74%
Soft Skills	74%
Safety	58%
Customer Service	58%
Management	53%
Technical/Computer Skills	47%
Reading/Writing	32%
Math	32%





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